



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services

Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner



January 12, 2016

The Honorable James Belanger, Chairman
House Municipal and County Government
Legislative Office Building, Room 301
Concord, NH 03301

Re: House Bill 1119 – relative to the maximum optional fee for transportation improvements charged by municipalities when collecting motor vehicle registration fees.

Dear Chairman Belanger and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) regarding House Bill 1119 relative to the maximum optional fee for transportation improvements charged by municipalities. NHDES supports this bill.

Motor vehicles account for approximately one-half of the emissions of air pollutants that cause the formation of ground level ozone and over one-third of the state's greenhouse gas emissions. Ground level ozone is a respiratory irritant that can cause severe health impacts to the sick, the very young, the elderly, and those with chronic respiratory conditions such as asthma. Greenhouse gases contribute to climate change, which is causing more frequent and more extreme weather events that have led to loss of life and significant damage to statewide infrastructure, particularly our roads and bridges.

The 2009 New Hampshire Climate Action Plan¹ called for a balanced, integrated, multi-modal transportation system that supports all modes of transportation including vehicles, public transportation options, pedestrians and bicycles. Historically, many communities have used their portion of the motor vehicle registration fee authorized under Revised Statutes Annotated 261:153 VI to support local projects that improve mobility within the community for all users, including using the funds to support operation of local public transportation. Such projects reduce emissions from the transportation sector by reducing use of single occupant vehicles. Increasing the maximum fee that communities may collect for support of transit and other mobility projects will lead to even further environmental benefits and improve mobility for residents.

¹ http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/air/tsb/tps/climate/action_plan/nh_climate_action_plan.htm

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 1119. Should you have further questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Craig Wright, Director, Air Resources Division (271-1088, craig.wright@des.nh.gov), or Rebecca Ohler, Administrator, Technical Services Bureau (271-6749, Rebecca.ohler@des.nh.gov) .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas S. Burack". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "T" and a cursive "Burack".

Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of HB1119-LOCAL: Reps. Higgins, Cloutier, Wood, Crawford, Sykes, J. Belanger, Gould, Vann, Chirichiello, Williams, Sen. Lasky